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Master's Thesis of International Studies

**Women's Political Representation and
Policy Legislation**
Study on the case of South Korean National Assembly

여성의 정치대표성과 여성정책 입법
대한민국 16 대-19 대 국회의 사례를 중심으로

August 2018

Graduate School of International Studies
Seoul National University
International Cooperation Major

HyunJoo Jhang

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지도교수 송지연

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국제학과 국제협력전공
장 현 주

장현주의 석사학위논문을 인준함

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위원장 김종섭 (인)

부위원장 신성호 (인)

위원 송지연 (인)

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Thesis Advisor: Jiyeoun Song

Submitting a master's thesis of International Studies

August 2018

Graduate School of International Studies
Seoul National University
International Cooperation Major

HyunJoo Jhang

Confirming the master's thesis written by
HyunJoo Jhang

July 2018

Chair *Chongsup Kim* (Seal)
Vice Chair *SungHo Shree* (Seal)
Examiner *Jiyeoun Song* (Seal)



Abstract

The efforts to promote political participation and representation of women have been carried out internationally. As one of the measures, the electoral gender quota system has been adopted as to increase the number of women in the political institutions. In South Korea, as well, the number of elected female members in the national assembly demonstrated a rapid increase followed by the introduction of the quota system. In line with this trend, the thesis addresses the following question; does the increase in the number of female politicians have influences on the legislation of women's policy? By examining proposed and passed women's policies by both male and female members of national assembly from the 16th to 19th national assembly, the study attempts to discover the effects of numeric presence on the policy outcomes. The personal traits will also be observed to see if particular experiences as woman matter in shaping policy preferences. The thesis argues the importance of women's presence in the national assembly, as female politicians tend to articulate more policies for women's economic and social participation, with the sense of responsibility to represent women in the national assembly.

Keywords: women's political representation, substantive representation, legislative behaviour, women's policy

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I. Introduction

The issue of gender equality and empowerment has long been on the discussion table in the international development field. It cannot be denied that traditionally, the presence of women was limited to the private and reproductive domain. The absence of equal access and resources had been continued to impede the participation in the public arena, including but not limited to politics. Followed by continuous efforts from women's movements around the world, Beijing Conference on Women in 1995 finally contended with a need for an institutional mechanism for greater equality and opportunities for women. Needless to say, the equality in political participation was one of the main objectives. More recently, the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also explicitly targeted gender equality and provision of equal opportunities and participation of women in all areas of the society.¹ While women have secured their rights to participate in politics, such as enfranchisement, run for an election and organise political offices, the formal representation of women in parliaments was still regarded as underrepresented.² The importance of women's political participation was built upon the rationale that more women in the parliament would mean an equal representation of all the citizens in the society.

As the importance of women's participation in politics has been chosen as one of the indexes that could demonstrate the gender equality of the county by the United Nations (SDGs), many countries have been striving to enhance equal participation of men and women in the policymaking process. While countries in

¹ United Nations, *Sustainable Development Goals*, Target 5.5.

² Rai, S. M. *Equal Participation of Women and Men in Decision-making Processes, with Particular Emphasis on Political Participation and Leadership: Background Paper*. United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2005). <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/FinalReport.pdf>>. [Accessed Nov. 2017].

Europe and elsewhere demonstrated remarkable improvement over the past decades, women's status in the political arena is still a concern in many other countries in Asia, including South Korea. According to the UN index, South Korea was positioned at 97th for the gender equality, yet, especially in the politics and higher rank officials, the percentage of women is deficient.

<Table 1.1: Gender Gap Index>

Category	World Average	Korea			
		Score	Rank	Woman	Man
Economic Participation and Opportunity	0.58	0.53	121		
Labour force participation (%)	0.67	0.73	91	55.9	76.3
Wage equality for similar work	0.63	0.51	121		
Estimated earned income (PPP, US\$)	0.51	0.45	121	22,090	49,386
Legislators, senior officials and managers	0.32	0.12	117	10.5	89.5
Professional and technical workers	0.76	0.93	76	48.1	51.9
Educational Attainment	0.95	0.96	105		
Literacy rate	0.88				
Enrolment in primary education (%)	0.98	0.99	84	97.9	98.5
Enrolment in secondary education (%)	0.97	0.99	101	96.2	97
Enrolment in tertiary education (%)	0.94	0.77	112	80.2	104.8
Health and Survival	0.97	0.96	84		
Sex ratio at birth	0.92	0.93	132		
Healthy life expectancy (%)	1.04	1.06	1	75.3	70.8
Political Empowerment	0.23	0.13	90		
Women in parliament	0.28	0.20	97	17	83
Women in ministerial positions (%)	0.21	0.10	115	9.1	90.9
Years with female head of state (%)	0.20	0.10	28	4.7	45.3

Source: World Economic Forum (2017), 198.

Since the 2000s, the studies in South Korea have also been addressing the need for increased participation and representation of women in politics emerged

as the critical step to advance women's rights, status and interests. In South Korea, the social and economic limitations on women persisted due to, arguably, the social and cultural normative structure built on the patriarchal traditions. Many ascribe the lack of political participation of women to the problems with the electoral system. There is a pool of research about the gender quota system in candidate nominations in the other countries suggests the applicability of similar mechanism in South Korea.³ Eventually, the gender quota system was first introduced for lower level provincial elections in 2002 and legalised for proportional representation system in 2005 national election. Until now, many have pointed out the changes in the South Korean political scene that are owing to the introduction of the gender quota system.

The thesis takes off from this point, attempts to find the impact of the increased numeric presence of female politicians in the South Korean National Assembly in the past sixteen years. Then, it will examine if female politicians have been articulating more policies related to women compared in comparison to male politicians. In the literature review, the concept of descriptive and substantive representation will be discussed. Prior to the empirical analysis, the history of South Korean women's political representation and women's policy will be presented. The thesis will then examine the effects of better female representation on the women's policies intended to represent women's interest. By examining the correlation between the number of a female politician in the

³ Won-Hong Kim and Eun-Kyung Kim, "Sŏn'gŏgujo kaehyŏkkwa yŏsŏngŭi taep'yosŏng hwakpobangan" *Korean Women's Development Institute* (1998); Won-Hong Kim, Min-Jung Kim, Hyunchool Lee and Eun-Kyung Kim, "Yŏsŏngŭi chŏngch'ijŏng taep'yosŏng hwakporŭl wihan chŏngch'igwan'gyebŏpt-chedo kaesŏnbangan", *Ministry of Gender Equality and Family* (2001); Hyeon-Woo Lee, "Women's Political Representation and Political Parties", *The Korean Journal of International Relationship* 42:3 (2002), 338-339.

national assembly and the number of women's policies proposed and implemented from the 16th to 19th assembly, the thesis will attempt to reveal any relationship between the number of women and the policy outcome. In the final part of the analysis, in hopes of clearing the ambiguous link between descriptive and substantive representation, the thesis will conduct qualitative study with their personal characteristics and comments made during the assembly meeting minutes. It will observe if their lifetime experiences had an impact on shaping their interests and preferences, and if their identity as 'woman' played a part during the policymaking process.

II. Literature Review

The first section of the literature review will review the theoretical framework for political representation. The following section will discuss women's interest in the question of what should be represented by representatives. The third and fourth section will focus on the different approaches and cases of descriptive and substantive representation of women with the cases around the world, implying the growing awareness on the importance of women's political representation.

2.1. The Concept of Political Representation

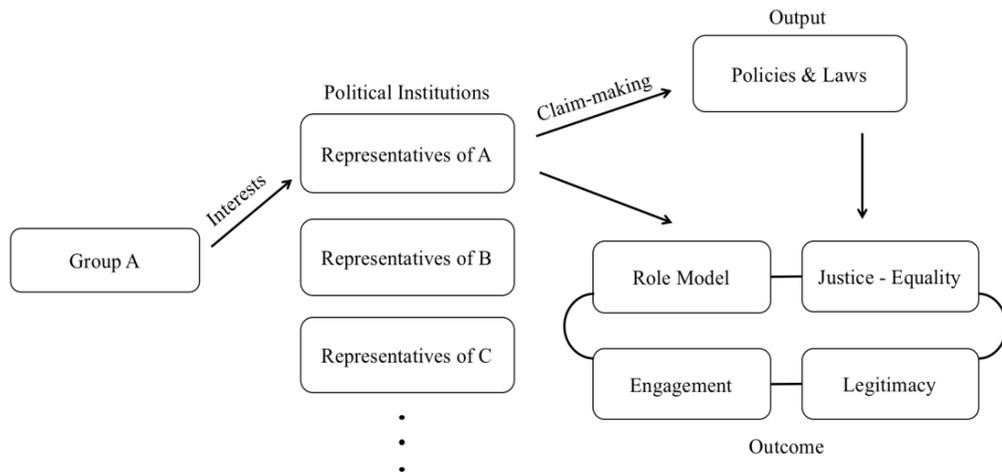
The political representation generally refers to the articulation and presentation of interests and preferences of the groups in the formal political venues.⁴ The topic has been widely studied in political science due to its importance as one of the primary preconditions for the democratic nations.⁵ While agreeing upon the core values, there is a range of different approaches to the concept of representation to characterise the ideal relations between the representatives and the represented. In the book 'Concepts of Representation,' Hanna Pitkin distinguishes four dimensions of political representation: formal representation, descriptive representation, symbolic representation and substantive representation. Formal representation refers to the institutional rules and procedures for both the selection and elimination of representatives. The rule and procedures mean the free and fair elections which are considered as a critical

⁴ Karen Beckwith, "Plotting the Path from One to the Other: Women's Interests and Political Representation" in Escobar-Lemmon, Taylor-Robinson, Escobar-Lemmon, Maria C, and Taylor-Robinson, Michelle M. eds. *Representation: The Case of Women*. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 32-33.

⁵ John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1861/1958), Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1989), 29.

condition to operationalise the formal representation.⁶ Descriptive representation is concerned with the range that representatives ‘stand for’, in other words, the composition of representatives matching with the represented in various characteristic aspects, such as occupation, race, ethnicity, class and gender.⁷ Symbolic representation stretch further from the extent to ‘stand for’, emphasising the representatives being a symbol produce meanings, perspectives and attitudes.⁸ Finally, substantive representation refers to the extent that representatives ‘act for’ the represented responsively. All of them are conceived as fundamental and interconnected dimensions of the concept of representation. To summarise, political representation is primarily a public, institutionalised arrangement involving many people and groups, and operating in the intricate ways of large-scale social arrangements.

<Figure 1.1: Practice of Political Representation>



Note: The figure made based on Based on Hanna Pitkin (1972) and Anne Phillips (1998).

⁶ Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

⁷ Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 97.

⁸ Ibid.

Given the long history of the limited inclusion in the public arena, women's representation in the decision-making institutions has been considered as having a potential to reflect gender perspectives into actual policies, regarded as an indicator for both equal opportunity and access to the political system.⁹ To move further, to be able to participate in the political decision-making process as an elected member of parliament/national assembly, viewed as essential both in descriptive and symbolic ways.¹⁰ The implications are based on the several grounds. In the first place, representation is one of the fundamental values of democracy. The argument of justice and legitimacy follows this first statement, asserting that all members of the democratic society should be treated relatively protected by the appropriate process and instruments operated by their elected delegates. The parliament, or the national assembly, should provide and work as the public venue that should represent the interests of the represented. It is one of the primary functions of the national assembly to set up laws and institutions in response to the interests of all citizen, including women. Members of the national assembly are the main actors in this process, mainly distinguished by legislative policymaking.

⁹ Catherine Bolzendahl and Clem Brooks, "Women's Political Representation and Welfare State spending in 12 Capitalist Democracies" *Social Forces* 85:4 (2007); Marian Sawer, "Parliamentary Representation of Women: From discourses of justice to strategies of accountability." *International Political Science Review* 21:4 (2000).

¹⁰ Beckwith, "Plotting the Path from One to the Other", 32.

2.2. Women's Interest and Policy

The underlying concept of political representation, therefore, is the representation of the 'interests' of the group represented through public, and national level of institutions. In this regard, the significance of women's representation in the political arena, such as legislative bodies is accepted without significant objections in the academia. An abundance of research and academic journals argued that to secure women's position in the politics is crucial as women are more likely to translate gender-specific needs and interests into the policy-making process, which means, able to represent women in the country. However, it is necessary to define what it means by women's interests. What is 'women's interest'? Feminist theories have been asserting that the disparities between man and woman, is not originated from the biological differences, but rather socially and politically constructed by the beliefs, customs, system and culture of the society that unreasonable expectations of roles for man and woman.¹¹ As a result, how they interact within and with the society inevitably produce particular perspectives and set of choices. Women's *interests*, in this regard, are developed from the life experiences of individuals. If there is an area where women share the experiences and become the major group of involvement, then it is most likely to be women's area of interest. Other research suggests that the issues brought forward by women's movement, organisations and agencies that also comprehend the changes in women's interest over the period.

However, there were also continuous attempts to emphasise the diversities among the women, from race to class. The 'intersectionality,' is one of the most discussed, and perhaps the important concept of the recent feminism studies. The past decades represented the emerging tension between a different group of

¹¹ Beckwith, "Plotting the Path from One to the Other", 20-21.

women. For example, between middle-class white and black women, and blue-collar and white-collar workers. While women could have the same interest area, the level of the issue would affect the interests to diverge.¹² Also, Sawyer expresses her concerns about categorising women's interest thereby producing another gender biased perception that leaves out the possibilities of male politicians speak and work for women.¹³ While it could be argued that every issue, such as foreign policy and environmental concerns, are women's issues and must not create 'gendered' distinctions, many have drawn the line to focus on the specific interests and different consequences that could not be experienced by men. To incorporate the multiple voices within, to the analysis, Beckwith carefully differentiates between interest, issue and preference. Interests are 'fundamental to women's life chances', issues mean 'strategic choices emphasising components of interest,' and preferences involves 'positioning actors to select among alternatives.'¹⁴ In short, women's interests are evidenced by women's visible assertion of those interest in a context of political presence, freedom and equality.¹⁵ Within the different strands of women's interest debates, three dimensions were evaluated; women's traditional roles within patriarchal societies, as shaped by their bodies, sexuality, and the possibility of giving birth; women's participation in the labour market; and women's opportunities to transform their roles to attain greater gender equality.¹⁶

¹² Beckwith, "Plotting the Path from One to the Other", 26.

¹³ Sawyer, "Parliamentary Representation of Women", 362.

¹⁴ Karen Celis, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola, and Mona Lena Krook. "Constituting women's interests through representative claims", *Politics & Gender* 10:2 (2014), 153.

¹⁵ Beckwith, "Plotting the Path from One to the Other", 21.

¹⁶ Valerie, O'Regan, *Gender Matters* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000); Reingold, Beth. *Representing Women*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Lena Wa'ngnerud, "Testing the Politics of Presence", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 23:1 (2002), 67-91, cited in Celis, Childs, Kantola, and Krook, "Constituting women's interests through representative claims", 153.

Attributed to the lack of a concrete framework for the dimensions of women's interests, likewise, the scope of women's policy varies upon scholars and their approaches to the subject. As to narrow down the scope of women's policy, the actors who intend to address the specific set of interests as a policy issue and the venue for such actors should equally be considered. Amy G. Mazur defines women's policy as a feminist policy, which has the following central concepts: a precise understanding of women as a group within the context of the social, economic, and cultural diversity of women; the advancement of women's rights, status or condition in the public and private sphere, and the reduction or elimination of gender-based hierarchy or patriarchy underpins fundamental inequalities between men and women in the public and private spheres.¹⁷ She further divides the policy area into eight different subcategories, which are blueprints for general principles, political representation, equal employment, reconciliation, family law, reproductive rights, sexuality and violence, and public service delivery.¹⁸

¹⁷ Amy G. Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3

¹⁸ Mazur, *Theorizing Feminist Policy*, 3.

2.3. Descriptive Representation: Number of Women in Parliament

If to assume that female politicians represent women's interests more than male politicians, the degree in which women's interests are articulated in the national assembly would be rather insignificant, when female politicians compose minority in the parliament. In short, when a specific group is a minority, it is difficult to confront the majority. The theory of critical mass supports this narrative, elucidating the magnitude of the numeric presence. Among many, it is widely accepted that the group need to compose at least 15 percent to exert substantial influences. Therefore, when the number of women reaches to a certain point, they would be able to have more impact in the legislatures, where the environment itself has been traditionally dominated by standards, norms and interests of male politicians. To reach beyond this threshold, again, would lead to the path to breaking from being 'token women.' Therefore, achieving greater descriptive representation has, undeniably, functioned as more than a mere symbolic gesture of recognition and gender equality in political institutions. The theory further implies that the changes or the outcome of increasing numbers do contribute to 'women-friendly' changes in and out of politics. The supporters of electoral quota system have argued for the introduction of such system in this context, that it could function as the fast-track for more equal political representation of women in the parliaments. So far by now, many countries have implemented legal measures at the national level or at party level to regulate the quota system as part of the effort to promote women's political participation. Rwanda, the country with the highest proportion of female politicians in the world, states in the constitution to have at least 30% of female members in the parliament.¹⁹ In France, the law on political party (La Parité) has been

¹⁹ Inter-parliamentary Union, "Women in National Parliaments: Comparative Data by Country" <<http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>> [accessed in 18 June 2018].

implemented in 2001, which is to ensure 50 percent of seats for both men and women.²⁰

Countries like Sweden, Finland, Germany and Great Britain do not prescribe by state law, yet, most of the party constitutions and regulations specify the quota for women. Swedish political parties began to introduce the party-level quota system in the 1970s, which is relatively early compared to the other countries in Europe. The proportion of female politicians have increased to nearly three times since the introduction of the quota system.²¹ The results demonstrated that the government's decision to adopt the quota system contributed to the increasing number of women in the parliament. The empirical cases around the world once again demonstrate that to increase the numeric presence of women in the political venues, is a critical factor in women's political representation, as a variety of claims from women which have been previously ignored could be articulated in the political arena. On the personal level, active involvement and input from women could empower them to reach their full potential as an equal member of the society. Although the reasons might vary among the scholars, the consensus is that greater women's political participation is undoubtedly necessary for the social development, let alone for women's rights. There also seems to be the agreement on the quota system as one of the easiest, yet effective institutional strategies to achieve such goal.

²⁰ Won-Hong Kim, Bok-Tae Kim, Hye-Young Kim, Sun-Young Jeon and Eun-Ju Kim, "Yösöngüi chöngch'ijöng taep'yosöng kwallyön sön'göböpt'pchedoüi hyogwasöng yön'gu" Korean Women's Development Institute (2015).

²¹ Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and candidate selection reform worldwide* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 107-108.

2.4. Substantive Representation: Effects of Women's Presence

The theory of critical mass seems to provide the reasons why women's voices were not enough, or equally represented in the politics. There are cases around the world testified the relationship between the number of women and the passage of legislatures seemed to show reasonable correlations, therefore theoretically persuasive. However, other studies have shown little or no differences, questioning the linear relationship between presence and outcomes.²² Critiques pointed out the two prepositions of the critical mass theory that all women act on behalf of women; and the percentage of women in the political institution as a critical determinant of their legislative behaviour. Anne Phillips expresses her scepticism on the focus on descriptive representation, arguing that, 'however plausible it is to say that male-dominated assemblies will not adequately address the needs and interests of women, it cannot be claimed with equal confidence that a more balanced legislature will fill this gap.'²³ In other words, while the proportion of women may influence in articulating new ideas and initiating policies particularly related to women's issue, it would be dangerous to measure the equal representation only with quantifiable outcomes.²⁴ Karen Celis, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola and Mona Lena Krook also share the same line. They specifically mentioned that investigation of female members of parliament should not be a mere counting of numbers, rather ask whether those women in the parliaments contributed to the changes, such as proposing bills addressing women's interest.²⁵ Similarly, Marian Sawer, in her article, argues that it is

²² Philip Cowley and Sarah Childs, "Too Spineless to Rebel? New Labour's Women MPs", *British Journal of Political Science* 33:3 (2003), 346-348.

²³ Phillips, *Feminism and Politics*. (Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Marian Sawer, Manon Tremblay and Linda J. Trimble. "Representing Women in Parliament: A Comparative Study", *Routledge Research in Comparative Politics* (Abingdon, Oxon; N.Y.: Routledge, 2006), 121.

²⁵ Karen Celis, Sarah Childs, Johanna Kantola, and Mona Lena Krook. "Constituting Women's interests through Representative Claims" *Politics & Gender* 10:2 (2014), 99.

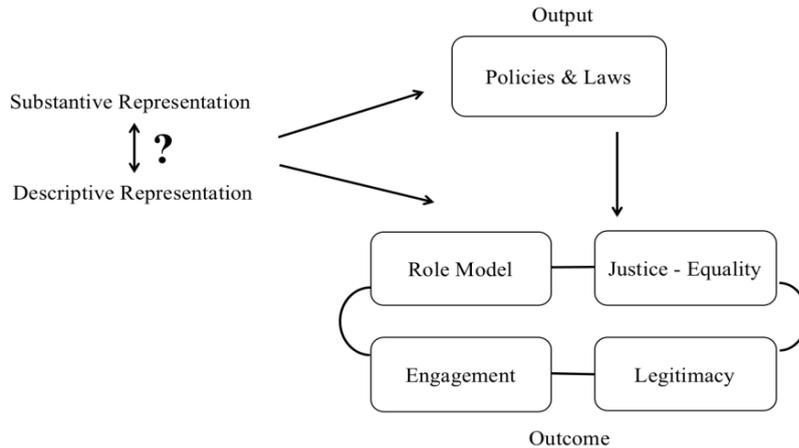
necessary to define different categories that representation implies in its term to assess the ultimate meaning of women's political representation.²⁶ In other words, representation itself would not guarantee the changes beneficial to women. Have it been noted as quite straightforward, while one should not succinctly assume the fact that the historically discriminative nature of politics that excluded women, rather, the question should focus on the factors that strengthen representation by distinguishing between 'stand for' and 'act for'.

In this vein, the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation needs to be examined with two interlocking questions; 'who are in the office?' for descriptive representation and 'do they make differences for the represented?' for substantive representation. To trace descriptive representation is much easier due to the visibility of data. However, the methods to measure substantive representation is somewhat problematic. With the long-term efforts of researchers in gender and politics studies to move further from the effects of proportion, other categories have been suggested, such as the characteristics of legislative contexts; identities and interests of legislators; and the features of policy-making process to name a few.²⁷

²⁶ Sawer, "Parliamentary Representation of Women", 362-363.

²⁷ Sarah Childs and Mona Lena Krook, "Analysing Women's Substantive Representation: From Critical Mass to Critical Actors", *Government and Opposition* (2009) 44:2, 127.

<Figure 1.2: Questioning the Process of Representation>



Political parties and the national assemblies could be used for the representatives to articulate the issues, responsive to the expectations, needs and interests, both at the individual and collective level. Theoretically, such activities should be visible in the official documents, in this study, it will be the content of policy proposed in the legislative bodies.²⁸ The necessity to examine the content, thus, respectively implies that individual’s perspectives, political views and beliefs, will be reflected in the individual’s decisions and policy planning. When talking about the individual’s perspectives, beliefs and interests, personal background and experiences, such as career, education could be considered as influential factors.²⁹ Many researchers in the United States have concluded that personal characteristics, for example, ethnicity, gender and religious beliefs, served as one of the important sets of determinants of politician’s legislative

²⁸ Beckwith, “Plotting the Path from One to the Other”, 38.

²⁹ Ferderick Writ, Roy Morey and Louis Brakeman, *Introductory problems in political research*. (Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Cited in Kathy Canfield-Davis, Sachin Jain, Don Wattam, Jerry McMurtry, and Mike Johnson. "Factors of Influence on Legislative Decision Making: A descriptive study", *Journal of Legal, Ethical & Regulatory Issues* 13:2 (2010), 56.

behaviour.³⁰ Barry Burden reveals that personal characteristics are closely linked to how congressmen behave regarding policy initiations, voting and speaking in the parliament.³¹ While politicians are influenced by a set of different forces in terms of their policy preferences, internally, the policy positions of congressmen are determined by personal experiences, values, interest and ideology.³² The politicians would have perspectives on what is to be a ‘good policy’, based on the values from their lifetime experiences, which ultimately influences the judgements and decisions in the legislative activities.³³ Simply, in this regard, individual’s education level and former occupation that are shaped by personal choices and values also shape policy preferences.

In similar terms, one of the external factors considered to influence women’s political activities in the parliament is the political parties and partisanship.³⁴ Party ideologies shape perspectives, issue prioritisation and consequently, agenda setting. Childs and Krooks notes that party affiliation and ideology, especially regarding candidate nomination and party disciplines, becomes the crucial factor in understanding how elected members of the

³⁰ Marcus Baumann Marc Debus and Jochen Muller, “Personal Characteristics of MPs and Legislative Behavior in Moral Policy Making,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (May 2015) 40:2, 180.

³¹ Barry C. Burden, *Personal Roots of Representation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

³² Burden, *Personal Roots of Representation*.

³³ Ibid.; Philip Jones, “Politicians are People Too”, in Gary King, Kay L. Schlozman and Norman Nie eds. *The Future of Political Science: 100 Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 16-18.

³⁴ Miki Caul, “Women’s Representation in Parliament: the role of political parties,” *Party politics* 5:1 (1999); Beth Reingold, *Representing women: Sex, gender, and legislative behavior in Arizona and California* (University of North Carolina Press: 2003), Tracy L. Osborn, *How Women Represent Women: Political Parties, Gender and Representation in the State Legislatures*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

parliament shape the specific policy positions.³⁵ The solutions they suggest in the form of policies, thus embed the particular perspective developed by party ideology.³⁶ In her article, Amy Caiazza shares a similar line and argues that policy initiatives and agendas are influenced by the political parties they are affiliated.³⁷ The linkage between left parties based on the liberal egalitarian ideologies, and the awareness of the social issues, including minority groups, has been widely accepted. Traditionally speaking, women's movement has been generated from the leftist group both at the social and political level. In this context, it has been suggested that left parties are more inclined to support and accept woman candidacies.³⁸ Focusing on the interaction between partisanship, electoral coalitions, and institutional position, Sewers demonstrates that women in the House of Representatives in the United States became more active on social welfare issues when they were in the majority party, indicating that when they have access to the congressional agenda, women increase their participation on the social welfare policies.³⁹ Furthermore, while particular party ideologies provide a more favourable environment to initiate policies for women, the opportunities for members for policy proposals are still intertwined with the political climate, including institutional machinery and the presence of women's caucuses.⁴⁰

³⁵ Childs and Krook, "Analysing Women's Substantive Representation" 130; Sarah Childs, "A feminised style of politics? Women MPs in the House of Commons", *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 6:1 (2004), 5.

³⁶ Osborn, *How Women Represent Women*, 2012.

³⁷ Amy Caiazza, "Does women's representation in elected office lead to women-friendly policy? Analysis of state-level data" *Women & Politics* 26:1 (2004).

³⁸ Caul, "Women's Representation in Parliament: The Role of Political Parties" *Party Politics* 5:1 (1998), 81-82.

³⁹ Michele L. Swers, *Women in the club: Gender and policy making in the Senate*. (University of Chicago Press, 2013), 160.

⁴⁰ Childs and Krook, "Analysing Women's Substantive Representation", 130.

All things considered, interests and identity shaped by personal characteristics and experiences could, in turn, determine individuals' preferences and decisions in the policy-making process. As mentioned in the discussion of women's interest, by its nature, women generally have a different set of interests and needs from men. Therefore, female politicians would become the agents who understand the origins of a specific set of interests and issues, translate them into the strategies in the political platforms.

III. Linking Numbers and Effects

3.1. Research Questions

As discussed in the previous researches and theoretical frameworks, if, to assume that women have different policy intentions based on the interests, presumably that of women, the increased number of women in the national assembly would raise the number of policies that specifically address women's issues. The following hypothesis and questions are formulated in this regard;

A. If female politicians articulate women's issues more than male politicians, then;

A-i. The number of women's policies proposed and passed will increase with the higher proportion of women in the national assembly.

A-ii. The difference in policy preferences between men and women will be distinctive.

B. If A, A-i and A-ii is valid, then;

B-i. Who are those choose to 'act for' women?

B-ii. Do they choose to 'act for' women as 'women'?

For the hypothesis A, the thesis will probe if the increased number of female politicians contributes to the more policies that cover women's issues. If the numeric presence of women illustrates the meaningful changes in legislatures, then it would like to test hypothesis B, and examine the factors that make them to 'act for' the women.

3.2. Women in South Korean Politics

3.2.1. Political Representation

South Korean women have been casting a ballot for seventeen presidential elections, eighteen general elections and eight local assembly elections after receiving enfranchisement since the country's independence in 1945. In the National Assembly election, a mixed system of district elections and a nationwide proportional election is applied. For the seat allocations, the number of seats for proportional representatives were allocated only after the number of electoral districts is determined.⁴¹ There are have been more than 200 seats in total for the national assembly, however, women's presence in politics has been almost invisible. Due to patriarchal culture and the fixed gender role, the participation rate for women in politics, economy and society have been weak. Especially in the politics, shaped under the male-dominated political culture, women had no active role. Table 2 illustrates the number of seats that women secured in South Korean politics since the first national assembly. It is evident that the political underrepresentation of women has continued until the 2000s. The threshold of 15 percent only appears after the 17th election in 2004.

⁴¹ Chung-Si Ahn and JeeSeon Jeon, "Empowering Women in South Korea's New Democracy through the Quota System: Analysis of the 2006 Local Election" *Journal of Korean Politics*, 16:2 (2007).

<Table 2: Number of Male/Female Politicians from 1948-2016>

	Total	Man			Woman			Woman (%)
		District	Proport	Total	District	Proport	Total	
1948 (1st)	200	199		199	1		1	0.50%
1950 (2nd)	210	208		208	2		2	0.95%
1954 (3rd)	203	202		202	1		1	0.49%
1958 (4th)	233	230		230	3		3	1.29%
1960 (5th)	233	232		232	1		1	0.43%
1963 (6th)	175	130	43	173	1	1	2	1.14%
1967 (7th)	175	130	42	172	1	2	3	1.71%
1971 (8th)	204	153	46	199	0	5	5	2.45%
1973 (9th)	219	144	63	207	2	10	12	5.48%
1978 (10th)	231	153	70	223	1	7	8	3.46%
1981 (11th)	276	183	84	267	1	8	9	3.26%
1985 (12th)	276	182	86	268	2	6	8	2.90%
1988 (13th)	299	224	69	293	0	6	6	2.01%
1992 (14th)	299	236	55	291	1	7	8	2.68%
1996 (15th)	299	251	39	290	2	7	9	3.01%
2000 (16th)	263	222	35	247	5	11	16	6.08%
2004 (17th)	299	233	27	260	10	29	39	13.04%
2008 (18th)	299	231	27	258	14	27	41	13.71%
2012 (19th)	300	227	16	253	19	28	47	15.67%
2016 (20th)	300	227	22	249	26	25	51	17.00%

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System <
http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>

The electoral reforms have widely been regarded as the significant factor that contributed to the increase of women's political presence in South Korea. Since the 1970s, initiated and led by women's organisations, many of the women's movements demanded the establishment of a national task force and institutions for women's issues, let alone the legislation of related laws to expand the level of participation in all parts of society. In the more politically open environment after the May 18 Democratic Uprising in 1987, emerging voices from women's organisations and activists cried for the advancement of women's right, including political participation. Despite the backlashes, women's movements continued to demand the establishment of legal and institutional

measures, exerting concurrent pressure to domestic policymakers at the advent of international trends since the Beijing Conference in 1995. As a result, during the Kim Dae-Jung administration in 2000, the election law was revised so that 50 percent of women at district elections and 30 percent of proportional representatives should be nominated. Each political party need to have half of the women out of all candidates proportionally.⁴² The reforms, to a large extent, intended to pave the ways for women to enter the political arena through legal measures. Despite the conflicts and doubts when introduced, the electoral reforms marked the beginning of the change in the South Korean political scene.

To summarise, women's political representation experienced gradual improvements through the increase in the number of women's legislators by a series of reforms. There is still no fundamental change to the fact that women are underrepresented when compared to men. In Korea, the persistence of the stereotypical concept of gender, the male-dominated political structure and culture, the lack of access to political, economic and social resources are still regarded as the impediment to the more significant political representation of women.

3.2.2. Development of Women's Policy and Institutions

In the 1960s to 70s, women's policies in South Korea were mainly related to the family planning and sex workers. Along with the emerging women's movements in the 1980s, women's policies expanded to cover more issues, such as female employment and gender-based violence. In 1983, the Korea Women's Development Institute was established. Subsequently a 'Committee for Women's Policy Review' was set up in 1985, which marked the beginning of the institutionalisation of policy planning and implementation. During Kim Young-

⁴² National Election Law. Article 47, Clause 2.

Sam administration, women's policy appeared as one of the primary policy areas required further attention. The Kim administration established 'Framework Act for Women's Development' in 1995, in hopes of eliminating the factors that restricted women's participation in all areas of society as part of achieving gender equality.⁴³ As a consequence, each political party began to emphasise the meaning of women's participation, often presented in the electoral pledges, which showed that women's casts became one of the critical variables in the elections. The Basic Plan for Women's Policy was established in 1997 to provide initiatives to promote gender equality, including increase women's participation in society, extension of welfare and healthcare. This comprehensive policy plan is reviewed by central and local governments every five years based on the 'Framework Act for Women's Development.'⁴⁴

In 2001, 'Special Committee for Women's Affairs' was established in the national assembly, allowed the legislative procedures dedicated to women-related policy with more than twenty members. In both Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-hyun administration, the establishment of administrative, legislative and research institutions continued which presents the meaningful progress at the national level. The active and continuous efforts from the women's group have raised demands for women's policies, and the various national policy implementations reflect the growing consciousness in women's political participation pushing towards for the more representativeness of their interests.

⁴³ Seon Young Yoon and Young Jin Shin, "Urinara yösöngjōngch'aegae taehan p'yōnggawa palchōnbangane kwanhan yōn'gu: yōktae chōngbu yösöngjōngch'aektamdanggiguūi pigyo min pyōnch'ōn'gwajōngūl chungshimūro" *The Journal of Public Policy and Governance* 7:2 (2013), 42-43.

⁴⁴ Yoon and Shin, "Urinara yösöngjōngch'aegae taehan p'yōnggawa palchōnbangane kwanhan yōn'gu", 42-43.

3.3. Data and Method

As discussed, women's interests and concerns are represented in politics by elected members in various political institutions. The reason for choosing the national assembly for the analysis is because of the necessity of representatives that enables political and public debates on the particular issues, in this case, women's claim making, in the legislative process in the current political system. In the multi-party system of South Korea, the legislative power bestowed on the government and the national assembly, and the primary role of politicians is acknowledged as the representatives of electorates. Thus, how specific interest enters to the policymaking discussion is undoubtedly political. The institutional changes reflecting interests through such political process is how we define the substantive political representation.

Based on the category for the women's issue defined above, women's policies will be used as an indicator to evaluate the degree that women's voices are represented in the policy-making process, to test if female politicians have had a substantial impact on. In South Korea, the 'Framework Act for Women's Development' enacted in 1995, effective until 2014, states the women's policy as "a policy prescribed by Presidential Decree in relation to the promotion of gender equality, expansion of women's social participation and furtherance of women's welfare." The concept of women's policy is based on the underlying objectivities "to establish healthy homes and to have both men and women participate in the development of the State and society and share responsibilities through the promotion of gender equality, protection of motherhood, rectification and elimination of gender discriminatory mindsets, and development of women's abilities based upon individual dignity."⁴⁵ To take all opinions together into

⁴⁵ Framework Act on Women's Development Article 2, Article 3-1.

consideration, women's policy is defined as the policy 'that is designed to alleviate all kinds of inequalities and discriminations experienced by women, directly and indirectly, influenced their lives, as a result of the androcentric structure of the society' for the analysis.

The types of bills proposed were chosen according to the classification used by the Women and Family Committee of National Assembly in their reports published each assembly term (Table 3.1). During the 16th assembly, the focus was more on establishing the foundational framework for gender equality and healthcare. Throughout 17th to 19th assembly, the topics of gender-based violence and economic participation of women were highly discussed, which could be interpreted as improving social and economic status for women in Korea.

The policy areas that had been consistently mentioned since the 16th assembly are as follows; 'Prohibition on Gender Discrimination', 'Prevention of Gender-based Violence', 'Maternity Protection and Women's Health', 'Support for Family and Child Care', 'Expansion of Economic, Political and Social Participation', and 'Promotion of Gender Equality'. Based on the conditions founded on the Mazur's criteria, 'Support for Family and Child Care', 'Expansion of Economic, Political and Social Participation' were selected as they are 1) highly and directly relevant to women's lives; 2) expected to have a substantial level of impact on the encouraging women to participate in the various sectors. While agreeing on to the point that diversities within women's experiences, it cannot be discussed outside of the legal, political, economic, and cultural context of a society, thus the cultural and social context of South Korea is considered. In South Korea, women are usually perceived and expected to take a role in caring for and nurturing the children and family in the society. In the occasions of

making their choices to participate in the economic and social activities, therefore, family and children become the major concern. Within this classification, the bills consistently appeared and discussed throughout the 16th to the 19th National Assembly were sorted out. In ‘Maternity Protection and Women’s Health’ category, ‘Mother and Child Health Act’, ‘Employment Insurance Act’ and ‘Labour Standards Act’ is selected. In ‘Family and Child Care Support’ category, ‘Framework Act on Healthy Homes’, ‘Act on the Promotion of Creation of Family-Friendly Social Environment’, ‘Infant Care Act’, ‘Child Care Support Act’ and ‘Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation’ and ‘Single-Parent Family Support Act’ is selected. In ‘Expansion of Economic, Political and Social Participation’ category, ‘Framework Act on Women’s Development’ is selected as it corroborates the women’s policy classifications. Although appeared in three consecutive terms, ‘Framework Act on Low Birth Rate in an Aging Society’ is excluded because while the purpose of creating more opportunities of economic activities for women is stated, the law does not have particular remarks on the welfare, but only mentions the promotion of childbirth as a countermeasure against an ageing society.

<Table 3.1: Categories of Women’s Policy, 16th-19th Assembly>

Category	Name of Bill
Prohibition of Gender Discrimination (Provision of Gender Equality)	Act on the Registration, Etc. of Family Relationships Educational Officials Act State Public Officials Act National Pension Act Act on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance Act Public Toilets etc. Act Local Public Officials Act
Prevention of Gender-based Violence	Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection, Etc. Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment, Etc. of Crimes of Domestic Violence Educational Officials Act State Public Officials Act Military Personnel Management Act Military Criminal Act Popular Cultural and Arts Industry Development Act Private School Act Act on the Prevention of Commercial Sex Acts and Protection, Etc. of victims Sexual Violence Prevention and Victims Protection Act Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment, Etc. of Sexual Crimes Act on Pharmacologic Treatment of Sex Offenders Sexual Impulses Child Welfare Act Act on the Protection of Children and Juveniles Against Sexual Abuse Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment, Etc. of Child Abuse Crimes Framework Act on Women's Development Resident Registration Act Local Public Officials Act Act on Probation and Electronic Monitoring, Etc. of Specific Criminal Offenders Act on the Regulation of Amusement Business Affecting Public Morals Criminal Act
	Employment Insurance Act National Health Promotion Act

Maternity Protection and Women's Health	<p>Labour Standards Act</p> <p>Welfare of Older Persons Act</p> <p>Mother and Child Health Act</p> <p>Framework Act on Health and Medical Services</p> <p>Private School Act</p> <p>Support of Female Farmers and Fishermen Act</p> <p>Framework Act on Low Birth Rate in an Aging Society</p> <p>Administration and Treatment of Correctional Institution Inmates Act</p>
Family and Child Care Support	<p>Act on the Promotion of Creation of Family-Friendly Social Environment</p> <p>Framework Act on Healthy Homes</p> <p>Marriage Brokers Business Management Act</p> <p>Higher Education Act</p> <p>Military Personnel Management Act</p> <p>Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act</p> <p>Act on Long-term Care Insurance for Older Persons</p> <p>Multicultural Families Support Act</p> <p>Child Care Support Act</p> <p>Act on Enforcing and Supporting Child Support Payment</p> <p>Support of Female Farmers and Fishermen Act</p> <p>Infant Care Act</p> <p>Early Childhood Education Act</p> <p>Single-Parent Family Support Act</p> <p>Act on the Implementation of the Hague Child Abduction Convention</p>
Expansion of Economic, Political and Social Participation	<p>National Human Rights Commission of Korea Act</p> <p>Labour Relations Commission Act</p> <p>Agricultural Cooperatives Act</p> <p>Forestry Cooperative Act</p> <p>Fisheries Cooperatives Act</p> <p>Act on Support for Female-owned Business</p> <p>Public Official Election Act</p> <p>Framework Act on Women's Development</p>
Promotion of Gender Equality	<p>Gender Impact Analysis and Assessment Act</p> <p>Framework Act on Women's Development</p>

Source: "Status of Gender Equality Legislations", Gender Equality and Family Committee, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th National Assembly, National Assembly Bill Information System <<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>

While acknowledging the difficulties to assess the degree of substantive representation, it could be constructed from the previous discussions that the context of the legislature and legislative process by the representatives. The personal characteristics that structured the area of interest and identity of the representatives would possibly suggest how individuals' actions substantively embrace the representativeness for the constituents. Regarding examining policy preferences and legislative contexts, the number of successfully legislated laws and policies, regarded as an obvious political outcome, will first be examined. According to the Article 79 of National Assembly Act, the member of assembly could propose a bill with approval from at least ten members. There are three types of proposals. First is the 'independent proposal', which is drafted and proposed by one member with approval from other members. If there are more than two members drafted the bill, one member must be clearly stated as a proposal delegate for the proposal. This 'representative proposal' is distinguished from the 'joint proposal,' which does not distinguish a proposal delegate, but states all members' names on the proposed bill. Therefore, 'independent proposal' and 'representative proposal' can be an indicator of interest in individual policy issues.

To test whether female politicians' interests were reflected in the legislative activities, the following data will be used. The variants are used to conduct behavioural analysis for substantive representation are; personal background and the comments from the minutes of national assembly meetings and public hearings for the bills proposed. The variables chosen for the individual background analysis are; age, education level, professional career experience, elected terms and party affiliation. It is generally assumed in South Korea that younger generations are more liberal and progressive. Therefore, they would

propose more women's policies which challenge the traditional cultural norms and structure based on patriarchal concepts. The level of education and career experiences would have been affected by individuals' area of interest. The elected terms were chosen as it could show the professionalism of politicians accumulated from various political activities throughout time. Party affiliation of members will show if party ideology and position affected the policy preferences. Finally, by looking into the records of the assembly meeting and public hearing minutes related to the policies they proposed, the ways in which female politicians identify themselves during policymaking will be observed.

IV. Empirical Analysis

4.1. Does number matter?: Analysis on policy outcomes

As assumed in the first hypothesis (A, A-i, A-ii), if female politicians are more likely to translate women's interests and needs into the policies, the number of women in the national assembly and the number of women's policy should have a linear relationship.

<Table 3.2: Number of Elected Male/Female Politicians, 1996-2012>

	Seat Total	Man			Woman			Woman (%)
		District	Proportional	Total	District	PR	Total	
1996 (15th)	299	251	39	290	2	7	9	3.01%
2000 (16th)	263	222	35	247	5	11	16	6.08%
2004 (17th)	299	233	27	260	10	29	39	13.04%
2008 (18th)	299	231	27	258	14	27	41	13.71%
2012 (19th)	300	227	16	253	19	28	47	15.67%

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<
http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>

Table 3.2 is a summary of five national assembly elections from 1996 to 2012. Since the 16th national election, which was the first election after the implementation of the 30 percent gender quota system in the proportional elections, the number of elected female politicians nearly doubled up, 3.01 percent to 6.08 percent. However, the introduction of quota system seems to have a limitation in 2000 elections. Despite the quota system designed to encourage the parties to secure 30 percent of quota for women, the female politicians' share of seats is still under the required percentage. This trend could be because the system itself did not have clauses for penalties or means to maintain the strict compliance with the rule. Also, it is difficult to track how political parties nominate the candidates due to Political Parties Act. Unlike other countries, such

as Sweden, where the party-level quota system has shown an instant result as the party activities are required to be transparent to the public, let alone the active participation and dedication of political parties are highly expected.

The result of the 17th national election presents a remarkable improvement in South Korean women's political representation. While the ratio of elected female members in the district elections only show slight increases after the 17th election, the ratio of proportional representatives continues to show impressive growth. The result is attributed to the revision of election law, which strengthened the gender quota for proportional representative candidates from 30 to 50 percent.⁴⁶ Despite the lack of an ordering method and penalty clauses like in 2000, all major political parties nominated female and male candidates from upper ranks, allowing women a higher possibility to be elected. Also, the increase in numbers by quota system could be regarded as the indication for the gradual changes within the political environment, accepting the particular share of seats for women as a normative process in the election by the political parties. In this regard, the introduction of quota system indeed had a positive impact on improving women's descriptive representation in South Korean national assembly, while proportional representative system serves as the primary path for women to enter the politics.

In an attempt to verify the relationship between the number of female politicians and number of women's policy appeared in the legislatures, the number of policies proposed by both male and female politicians in each national assembly term was calculated and summarised in Table 3.3. A total number of proposed bills for the assembly term was counted and further divided into the sections of 'passed' and 'not passed' to see how many policies have been enacted

⁴⁶ National Election Law. Article 47, Clause 2.

out of a total proposed. Likewise, selected women's policies were counted and arranged into the sections accordingly. As observed, women's policy proposed and passed by both genders shows a gradual increase in numbers. However, the remarkable result to emerge from the data comparison between the percentage rate of proposed bills from male and female politicians was that while no more than 2.0 percent of women's policy was proposed by men, the average of 6.2 percent of women's policy was proposed by women.

<Table 3.3: Bills Proposed and Passed by Male/Female Politicians, 2000-2012 >

	Gender	Seat Total	Proposed		Passed		Not Passed	
			All*	WP** (%)	All	WP (%)	All	WP (%)
2000 (16th)	Men	247	1545	22 (1.4%)	722	8 (1.1%)	823	14 (1.7%)
	Women	16	106	10 (9.4%)	48	7 (14.6%)	58	3 (5.2%)
2004 (17th)	Men	260	4667	59 (1.3%)	1849	28 (1.5%)	2818	31 (1.1%)
	Women	39	1061	44 (4.1%)	390	23 (5.9%)	671	21 (3.1%)
2008 (18th)	Men	258	9475	178 (1.9%)	3305	32 (1.0%)	6170	146 (2.4%)
	Women	41	1716	92 (5.4%)	561	17 (3.0%)	1155	74 (6.4%)
2012 (19th)	Men	253	12699	260 (2.0%)	4405	50 (1.1%)	8294	210 (2.5%)
	Women	47	2745	167 (6.1%)	941	57 (6.1%)	1804	54 (3.0%)

Note: *All in all areas of policies proposed during the term

**WP is an acronym for Women's Policy

Percentage (%) is calculated adherent to all areas of policy proposed

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System, National Assembly Bill Information System <<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>

Table 3.3 revealed that as the number of female politicians in the national assembly increases, more women's policies were proposed and passed for all assembly terms. The result is significant as it indicates the apparent differences in the policy preferences between male and female politicians. According to critical mass theory, with the focus on the actual number of representatives, female

politicians would only act as ‘token women’ as they would find it difficult to express their opinion as a minority group until they reach to a certain proportion in the national assembly. However, interestingly, it is evident from the figure that female politicians proposed more women’s policy during their terms since in the 16th assembly when female politicians constituted a very small proportion of 6.08 percent. In this context, South Korean female politicians, regardless of being the numerical minority, could be seen as the representatives who actively engage in the policy-making process, especially to reflect women’s interests. In this light, the result from Table 3.3 validates the hypothesis A, A-i and A-ii that women are more likely to articulate policies for women, therefore the increase in a number of female politicians will have positive correlations with the number of women’s policy in the legislature.

To supplement the analysis above, the reason for proposing the particular policy was examined to show that female politicians explicitly arranged to reflect the interests of women by using the detailed searching system provided by the ‘National Assembly Bill Information’ website. Table 3.4 is arranged to demonstrate how many women’s policies were proposed explicitly for encouraging women’s socio-economic participation, subdivided by selected women’s policies and addressed by female politicians in their initial bill proposals. Out of total women’s policies proposed, more than half of female members specified their reasons for a proposal that are directly related to the promotion of women’s socio-economic activities. For all proposed policies, they asked for the need for relevant government support or legal measures to encourage women to actively engaged with economic and social activities. For example, the provision of child care facilities, maternity leave, securing labour rights and equal employment opportunities and labour relations in the working place were

commonly suggested. Such result also indicates that specific experiences of each politician as a woman playing a role in recognising what are the issues necessary to be addressed for women constituents. Still, the number of policies that specifically stated women’s interest by male politicians are very low. Although male politicians did propose some women’s policies, it was instead dealing with the issues regarding budget allocations, alterations for specific clauses and management of state-funded facilities. The importance of parental leave was observable in some of the policy proposals, but only mentioned in terms of those women to serve their role as a caretaker of the family – traditionally regarded as the role of women. The need for childcare services took welfare policy approach for the low-income family, which women are inevitably in the position to have a regular paid-job for everyday lives.

<Table 3.4: Number (%) of women’s policy proposed *for* women’s socio-economic participation>

Period	Man		Woman	
	WP Proposed Total	Specified ‘Women’s Socio-economic Participation’ as a reason (%)	WP Proposed Total	Specified ‘Women’s Socio-economic Participation’ as a reason (%)
2000 (16th)	22	5 (23%)	10	10 (100%)
2004 (17th)	59	13 (22%)	44	23 (52%)
2008 (18th)	178	42 (24%)	92	70 (76%)
2012 (19th)	260	35 (13%)	167	142 (85%)

Note: Percentage (%) is calculated adherent to the all women’s policy proposed

Source: National Assembly Bill Information System

<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>

Overall, the results of policy outcomes support the theoretical argument of descriptive representation, reinforcing the importance of women’s presence in

the political institutions for achieving equal and responsive representation for the group represented. More importantly, although they still constitute a minority group in the national assembly, female politicians have been actively addressing women's interest and advocating relevant policies in legislatures. In this view, the question of substantive representation could perhaps be answered, that in the South Korean national assembly, women not only 'stand for' women, but 'act for' women.

4.2. Who represents?: Analysis on the individual background

From the previous analysis conducted on the increasing number of female members and women's policy, both proposed and enacted, presents important implications on securing more seats for women in the national assembly. This section of analysis is further organised to explore in what conditions female politicians act to make differences for women, and if their sense of 'being a woman' played a role during claim-making.

To examine the factors that played a role in policy preferences of female politicians, a set of personal traits is selected as a variable. The individual background will shape the perspectives and attitudes, that would have an impact on the policy preferences. If particular characteristics matter the most in legislative behaviour, the effects of increased seats of female politician would be inconclusive. In order to visualise the whole picture for the time series, they were grouped into different categories; age, education level, career experience, elected terms and political parties. In the case of political parties, as the names have changed over time, the names officially used in the 19th assembly were used in the table.

Looking first at Table 3.5, the data demonstrates the number of female politicians elected for each term and the policy proposed by them, categorised by age groups. The age of politicians is the year they were elected to the assembly. While forming the majority of elected female members, the politicians who were in the 40s and 50s proposed most of the policies throughout all assembly terms. Also, it is observed that the average age of female politicians rises each term.

<Table 3.5: Proposed and Passed Bills by Women by Age groups>

Age	Period	Women (%)*	All Proposed	Passed	Women's Policy Proposed	Women's Policy Passed
60s	16th	4 (25%)	17	9	2	1
	17th	5 (13%)	86	9	4	3
	18th	6 (15%)	178	53	15	3
	19th	7 (15%)	353	123	20	10
50s	16th	9 (56%)	69	31	8	6
	17th	3 (33%)	349	30	14	6
	18th	16 (39%)	701	249	47	12
	19th	20 (43%)	1339	490	64	22
40s	16th	3 (19%)	20	8	0	0
	17th	19 (49%)	566	8	24	11
	18th	16 (39%)	760	230	27	2
	19th	16 (34%)	828	265	65	19
30s	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	2 (5%)	60	0	1	1
	18th	3 (7%)	77	29	3	0
	19th	4 (9%)	234	63	18	3

Note: Percentage (%) is calculated adherent to the total seats of women in the assembly
Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>, National Assembly Bill Information Website<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>, 'People-Search' provide by NAVER<<https://people.search.naver.com/>>.

The result could be due to the implementation of the quota system, where parties tend to nominate the candidates with their experiences at politics, for example, already served their terms, therefore expected to have more chances to win the elections. As those who are in their 30s constitutes a marginal group, the result fails to provide a definitive answer to the expectation that younger

generation would be more actively involved in pursuing women's issue at legislatures.

<Table 3.6: Proposed and Passed Bills by Women by Educational Attainment>

Education	Period	Women (%)	All Proposed	Passed	Women's Policy Proposed	Women's Policy Passed
N/A	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	2 (5%)	70	25	1	0
	18th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	19th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
Middle School	16th	1 (6%)	14	3	0	0
	17th	1 (3%)	16	1	1	1
	18th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	19th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
High School	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	1 (3%)	34	15	1	0
	18th	2 (5%)	60	12	0	0
	19th	2 (4%)	78	25	3	1
University	16th	6 (38%)	41	22	1	1
	17th	12 (31%)	346	129	10	4
	18th	18 (44%)	635	235	44	6
	19th	17 (36%)	1001	297	40	7
Masters and PhD	16th	9 (56%)	51	23	9	6
	17th	23 (59%)	595	238	30	16
	18th	21 (51%)	1021	325	48	11
	19th	28 (60%)	1675	619	124	46

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>, National Assembly Bill Information Website<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>, 'People-Search' provide by NAVER<<https://people.search.naver.com/>>.

Table 3.6 looks at the number of policies proposed and enacted, categorised according to the educational background of politicians in each assembly term. From the table, the result shows that the number of politicians who received higher education (university degree and above) increased after each assembly term. When looking at the number of proposed women's policies, it is noteworthy that members with higher educational attainment were actively engaged, proposing most of the policies. It could be argued that the number of

policies proposed and enacted is juxtaposed with the increased number of women. the phenomenon nonetheless suggests the influx of professionals from different areas as the participatory level and positional power of female politicians improves, let alone government administration requires more expertise.

<Table 3.7: Proposed and Passed Bills by Women by Career Experience>

Career	Period	Women (%)	All Proposed	Passed	Women's Policy Proposed	Women's Policy Passed
Politician Party Member	16th	6 (38%)	51	24	3	3
	17th	15 (5%)	268	94	11	6
	18th	15 (38%)	520	175	16	3
	19th	16 (34%)	643	200	40	9
Social Organisation NPO	16th	3 (19%)	28	14	6	4
	17th	5 (3%)	167	73	3	2
	18th	6 (13%)	335	104	25	2
	19th	10 (21%)	721	281	44	19
Professional	16th	5 (31%)	23	8	0	0
	17th	19 (31%)	626	223	29	13
	18th	19 (49%)	819	258	50	12
	19th	17 (36%)	1053	336	70	24
Business Entrepreneur	16th	2 (13%)	4	2	1	0
	17th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	18th	1 (2%)	42	24	1	0
	19th	4 (9%)	331	124	13	2

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>, National Assembly Bill Information Website<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>, 'People-Search' provide by NAVER<<https://people.search.naver.com/>>.

Table 3.7 shows the number of policies proposed by the politicians with different professional career experiences. From one assembly to another, the proportion of women with political career experiences continues to decrease. To add, the number of women's policy proposed by those who were previously working in the social organisations (social welfare, women's rights, labour rights and relations and minority rights) and professional careers (lawyer, doctor, nurse, pharmacist, professor and teacher) were two times greater than that of the group with business career (self-employed entrepreneur). It is interesting to see that

enacted women's policies by politicians were reasonably low, indicating that their political experiences do not necessarily affect the ways in which they arrange the policy that is favourable in the legislature. Overall, the result indicates that the members who had the working experiences in the social organisations and the members with professions have been showing more interest and awareness in the women's issue, as well as translating such issues into policies that could benefit women's socio-economic activities.

<Table 3.8: Proposed and Passed Bills by Women by Elected Terms>

Terms	Period	Women (%)	AP Proposed	AP Passed	WP Proposed	WP Passed
Newly-elected	16th	14 (88%)	87	41	0	0
	17th	32 (82%)	987	373	40	19
	18th	28 (68%)	1224	410	76	15
	19th	35 (74%)	2197	776	136	46
Re-elected	16th	3 (19%)	19	7	0	0
	17th	4 (10%)	41	7	2	1
	18th	8 (20%)	379	110	12	2
	19th	7 (15%)	403	131	25	6
3rd Term	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	3 (8%)	33	10	1	1
	18th	2 (5%)	33	12	2	0
	19th	2 (4%)	105	23	6	2
4th Term	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	18th	3 (7%)	80	29	2	0
	19th	2 (4%)	49	11	0	0
5th Term	16th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	17th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	18th	0 (0%)	0	0	0	0
	19th	1 (2%)	0	0	0	0

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>, National Assembly Bill Information Website<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>, 'People-Search' provide by NAVER<<https://people.search.naver.com/>>.

Table 3.8 looks at the relationship between their terms in office and the number of policies proposed, as to examine if political experiences in the national assembly influenced their policy preferences. Almost all the policies have been

proposed by the newly-elected members for all assembly terms. However, there are almost no women's policies proposed by those who served more than third terms. The result illustrates that politicians in their first term of assembly are more eager propose to women's policies, while those who have already secured their seats are less likely to engage in the women's issues. This could be further tested whether it is related to the election strategy of winning the votes from the female electorates played a role or not. If to look at the number of female politicians for each term, more than 75 percent of women is newly-elected. The result implies that female politicians are unable to retain their seats in the assembly continuously. Although the quota system has been a useful measure in expanding numerical presence, it has not been able to improve political empowerment in the offices for substantive representation. In the national assembly, those who served more than one term are given priority to take the leadership role of chairman, vice-chairman and secretary which directly affects in the decision-making process. Therefore, if more women could serve more than one term in the assembly, it would mean the increased possibilities to represent women's interests. The continuity of their terms in office could thus be interpreted as an essential factor for substantive representation. It is difficult to say that the political culture has been transforming towards more woman-friendly during the candidate nomination process.

<Table 3.9: Proposed and Passed Bills by Women by Party Affiliation>

Period	Party	Women (%)	AP Proposed	AP Passed	WP Proposed	WP Passed
16th	Democratic National	1 (6%)	3	0	0	0
	Democratic (Minjoo)*	9 (56%)	67	24	5	3
	Saenuri (Hannara)	6 (38%)	36	48	5	4
17th	Democratic (Minjoo)	2 (5%)	33	14	2	2
	Saenuri (Hannara)	16 (41%)	518	182	26	11
	Democratic Labour	4 (10%)	158	53	2	0
	Yeolin Uri*	17 (44%)	352	147	13	8
18th	Democratic (Minjoo)	12 (29%)	536	170	35	2
	Saenuri (Hannara)*	21 (51%)	908	312	50	14
	Democratic Labour	2 (5%)	129	46	3	0
	Advanced Unification	2 (5%)	47	14	4	1
	Future Hope Alliance	4 (10%)	96	19	0	0
19th	Democratic (Minjoo)	24 (51%)	1540	468	88	25
	Saenuri (Hannara)*	17 (36%)	1005	385	65	26
	Unified Progressive	5 (11%)	137	35	13	2
	Advanced Unification	1 (2%)	72	53	1	1

Note: * Ruling Party

Source: National Election Commission's Electoral Information System<http://info.nec.go.kr/main/main_load.xhtml>, National Assembly Bill Information Website<<http://likms.assembly.go.kr/bill/main.do>>, 'People-Search' provide by NAVER<<https://people.search.naver.com/>>.

Finally, for the last table (Table 3.9), party affiliation has been chosen to see if party ideology and culture affects the behaviour of politicians. In Korea, Saenuri (Hannara) Party is one of the major political parties and has traditionally been aligned with right-wing conservative political ideology. Yeolin Uri in the

17th, Future Hope Alliance in the 18th assembly shares the same ideological line. Democratic (Minjoo) Party and Democratic Labour Party are the leftist progressive parties. From the 16th to 18th assembly, the number of female politicians in the ruling party was more significant than opposition parties. Yet, there are a higher number of female politicians in the opposition party were elected in the 19th assembly. This could be interpreted as a partial success achieved by the efforts to comply with the gender quota system for the candidate nomination made by Democratic (Minjoo) Party. While it was assumed that the policies proposed from the ruling party members would have a higher passing rate, the result shows, however in general, both ruling and opposition party proposed the same number of policies, and the passing ratio does not show any significant differences. However, it is worth noting that members from the parties known as more liberal and progressive ideology proposed more for women's policy.

4.2.1. Summary

In the individual background analysis, the result could offer the following generalisations on the relationship between individual experiences and legislative behaviour. First, the politicians who have previous career experiences in the relevant field and serving their first elected term as the members of ruling party and progressive party tend to put forward women's interest in the policy-making process. By looking at the number of bills passed, regardless of their terms in the assembly, all politicians were equally unable to exert their political power to pass the bill. The findings only provide a partial answer to the question b-i. Despite the diversity in their backgrounds, they are most likely to initiate policies that articulate women's interests.

4.3. Who represents?: Analysis on the personal comments

The analysis on the personal backgrounds attempted to answer the question of what makes female elected members act for women; the result demonstrated a very little relationship with the legislative behaviour. This leads to the next question if it was the role of an individual's identity as a woman links to the politicians' willingness to act for women. In order to examine if their identity as women influenced the ways in which they drafted the bills, let alone advocating for the policy changes, the national assembly meetings and public hearings minutes on women's policies are selected. The speeches and comments they make during the meetings will possibly help to conceptualise the ways in which female politicians perceive themselves when it comes to women's interests and policies.

To begin with, the bills related to maternal health and child care have occupied the consistent position since the 16th Assembly. Not to mention their reasons for proposals, female members explicitly demonstrated their identities as a mother during the related meetings held to review the bills they proposed.

Politician A (60s, Married, Former teacher, PhD in Early Childhood Education):

"I understand your position on the necessity to operate emergency care services, or part-time care services for children. There are so many occasions that *we* cannot carry our babies that requires much time, for example, going to village offices or hair salon to have perms. [omitted] I think those should be considered seriously. Isn't that wrong to ask your

neighbour to look after your baby when something happens all of sudden because there's no babysitting place?"⁴⁷

"[The period of receiving child care allowance] should be extended. The wage is the reason why they choose to go to work despite all the difficulties. And, there is a 'early leave' system for mothers with a child under the age of one, right? It takes more time to take care of a child older than one, actually. Babies start to walk around, and it is dangerous [to leave them alone]. This is why I ask for the extended time, and Minister, you should know about such a situation."⁴⁸

Politician B (50s, Married, Former committee member of Korean Women Workers Association):

"I know what you are trying to get here; the intention and all. But this is about child care. This is very sensitive issue, that needs to be treated in a serious manner."

Politician C (40s, Married, Former gynaecologist):

"It could be dealt in the additional procedures, I know. Actually, raising a child, I mean... I assume that there are many who already have experienced raising their children. There are times to release all the stresses [from spending all day looking after a child at home] for mental health."⁴⁹

It is evident from the above comments extracted from meeting minutes that many put their efforts to justify the proposed bills for child care support by using their personal experiences and cases of raising a child. It is

⁴⁷ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 268th, 2nd Women Family Committee, "Amendment on Child Care Support Act" (20th June, 2007), 14.

⁴⁸ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 267th, 1st Women Family Committee, "Amendment on Single-Parent Family Support Act" (16th April, 2007), 14.

⁴⁹ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 269th, 1st Legislative Subcommittee, "Amendment on Child Care Support Act" (20th June, 2007), 24-25.

also interesting to see that they provoke for the agreement from the other female members, by saying phrases like ‘we’ and ‘as we all know.’ Also, there are cases where male politicians support to extend the recipients’ conditions for child care allowance, arguing that the role of women, as a mother, is important for nurturing a child.

Politician D (40s, Married, Former lawyer):

[Director General for Childcare Policy commented on the public and professional opinion on the importance of maternal care for the 0-2 years to answer the question of define ‘infant’ to receive the child care allowance.]

“I would like to add on to that point. Practically, to be raised and cared by their mothers or grandmother is the greatest option for babies, even though there are many child care facilities with excellent teachers and programmes. Therefore, there is more to just increase the number of nursery homes.”⁵⁰

Politician E (50s, Married, Social Worker, Korean Women’s Association):

“The Minister [of Welfare] also mentioned that as a reason for rejecting the implantation of nationwide public postnatal care centres. I would like to make things clear for you as well. Mothers spend average two weeks at postnatal centre. You are saying that it could hurt attachment relationship between babies and mothers, right? You can say it because you have never been to those centres.”⁵¹

⁵⁰ 18th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 278th, 2nd Legislative Subcommittee, “Amendment on Infant Care Act” (20th November, 2008), 37-38.

⁵¹ 19th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 337th, 5th Legislative Subcommittee, “Amendment on Mother and Child Health Act” (19th November, 2015), 89-90.

During the meetings for employment-related bills, including but not limited to Labour Standards Act, Employment Insurance Act, Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family reconciliation and Act on Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-Interrupted Women, female politicians also demonstrated their working experiences as an employee.

Politician F (40s, Social Worker):

“I feel sorry for young generations, especially girls, because of the unemployment rate are worst these days. We cannot let those people lose their job just because they choose to get married and have kids. They say that ‘our career is interrupted because of the marriage, pregnancy and delivering children.’ This gives an impression that all of that is sole responsibility of women.”

“The second point we need to consider preventing women’s career interruption is to focus on the work-family balance. People will think about marriage and have children if there are enough services and regulations from their workplaces that guarantee maternity leaves, early leaves while pregnant and child care support.”⁵²

Politician G (40s, Married, Former journalist/news reader):

“The main reason for the proposal is that I have worked for 23 years, and I could not have another child because of the working environment. I wanted to, but the whole environment just didn’t allow me to have that option in mind. I only have one child now. So, I strongly wanted to take off the pressure from working mums by bring forward this as a social issue in the national assembly.”⁵³

⁵² 19th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 337th, 3th Legislative Subcommittee, “Framework Act on promotion of economic participation of career-interrupted women” (13th November, 2015), 20.

⁵³ 17th National Assembly Public Hearings on “Act on the Promotion of Creation of Family-Friendly Social Environment”.

Politician H (50s, Married, Masters in Gender Studies, Minister of Gender Equality and Family):

“Not only maternal leave, but all maternal health protection related bills that I have proposed are because of the low fertility rate. Women tend to – or forced to choose to quit their jobs because of pregnancy or lack of childcare support.”⁵⁴

Politician I (60s, Married, Former Nurse):

“For us, women, we have to be conscious about having a child and giving a birth. I assume you are aware with this reality. Then I think not only just this government but also corporations should be willing to cooperate in this process. Would you mind talking about how to make a ‘family-friendly’ corporate culture with *us*?”⁵⁵

All comments made addresses the social and cultural factors that discourage them to bear children and raise them while they maintain their career. Politician G’s remarks on the reason for initiating her bill, become quite powerful by delivering her personal stories on giving up her second child. Also, Politician F takes the example of young generations’ perspectives as well, implying that the culture of women to take all the burdens of domestic work, even they are working, continues to prevail in the society.

Also, specific education and career experiences reflected their policy interests and preferences that incorporates diversity within women, such as forms of employment, disability and professional expertise. Politician A not only actively engaged in the meetings, but also when possible, attempted to put

⁵⁴ 16th National Assembly Meeting Minutes on “Labour Standards Act”, 215th Environment and Labour Committee (5th December, 2000), 25.

⁵⁵ 18th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 284th, 9th Plenary Session (9th November, 2009) 18-19.

forward the labour issues which reflects her previous career experiences in the Korean Women Workers Association. The association was established to ‘improve women worker’s status’, and activities are related mainly to network building and pressuring government to implement relevant policies.

Politician B (50s, Former committee member of Korean Women Workers Association):

“We should definitely set priorities on the support for low-income families to alleviate polarisation. Well, this is something different. I would like to inquire about a different topic. The problem of non-regular employment is getting serious for the female workers. As you are already aware of, the female labour strike in Kiryung Electronics has been going on for seven months now. There are other cases, such as Sejong hospital, and KTX. Securing labour rights for those women in non-regular employment is a very important matter. Based on the survey, 70% of women are non-regular workers, and the wages are only 41% of the men in permeant jobs. This is severe discrimination against women.”⁵⁶

Politician J was elected as first women in the national assembly with disabilities, who had long been worked for Korea Disability Women’s Union. Similar with the case of Politician A, her primary policy focus was mainly about welfare for people with disabilities, but in this case, she particularly mentions ‘women with disabilities’.

Politician J (40s, Former human rights activist at Korea Disability Women’s Union):

“I would like to formally ask you, Minister, to pay more attention to the women with disabilities, for example, developing more programmes and

⁵⁶ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 259th, 1st Women Family Committee, “Amendment on Infant Care Act”, (6th April, 2006), 16-17.

increase government support for employment, and secure their places in the society.”⁵⁷

Interestingly enough, politicians who previously worked as a doctor, nurse or pharmacist were actively involved in the healthcare policies. One of the politicians with her degree in science initiated more policies that are related to science education in school curriculums.⁵⁸ There were also comments that reflected the area they studied for higher education, which appeared from a more in-depth discussion on deciding the legal terms and clauses and planning for the implementation of policies. Below dialogue is extracted from the discussion on the Single-Parent Family Support Act, when attendants began to talk about the negative public perception on raising a child as a single mother;

Minister of Gender Equality and Family (50s, PhD in Sociology):

“In short, compared to the other countries, I mean, as a sociologist, sexual culture in Korea is at the stage of anomie. We do not have social consensus on what is acceptable on this topic...”

Politician K (40s, PhD Candidate in Political Science):

“Minister, I have also studied sociology. The whole point of discussion is not about looking into the matter as a sociologist. ‘At the stage of anomie’ from a sociologist point of view? We have to talk about setting up the plans; this is what we call ‘governance’ in political science.”⁵⁹

⁵⁷ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 267th, 1st Women Family Committee, “Amendment on Single-Parent Family Support Act”, (16th April, 2007), 20.

⁵⁸ This politician in her 40s completed her PhD in Physics, had professional career experience as Science professor before elected to the 18th Assembly. Out of 25 policies she proposed, all of them were related to the promotion of science education in public schools. In the 19th assembly, members who had their previous experiences in the medical field (2 doctors and a pharmacist), proposed bills related to healthcare and medical services.

⁵⁹ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 267th, 1st Women Family Committee, “Amendment on Single-Parent Family Support Act”, (16th April, 2007), 24.

Likewise, in Politician H's comment below, she explicitly brings her knowledge from gender studies when she attempts to explain the validity of stating 'woman' in the legislation. She also mentions that extending the days for menstrual leave is not based on 'favouring women' in particular, rather, related to the labour rights and improving the working condition for 'employee'. Her comment also reflects her educational background in Gender Studies, which calls attention to the structural factors that favour or oppresses either men or women and therefore to secure equal rights of all gender, not favouring special treatment for women in all areas. Still, the comment implies that she is rather concerned that others might perceive her as being biased towards women because she is a woman. The way she put her thoughts into sentences reflects the perspective of herself identifying as a 'woman'.

Politician H (50s, Masters in Gender Studies, Minister of Gender Equality and Family):

“If we are to talk about this [using only 'woman' in the policy proposed] in gender studies framework, for example, it is certainly debatable. In academia, we rather understand this under the concept of 'gender' rather than biologically different 'female' body. And it is internationally accepted.”

“In such times of low fertility and low productivity, I do think we need to reconsider adjusting maximum days for menstrual leave. This is not the matter of favouring specific gender, but I see this as protecting labour rights as a whole.”⁶⁰

⁶⁰ 16th National Assembly Meeting Minutes on “Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation”, (5th December, 2000), 8-9; 21.

However, it should be taken into account that the analysis of the legislative bills and the records of public hearings has its limitations. Since the extracted comments are only small part of meetings which were held only for some occasions within each assembly terms, it would question the legitimacy as sufficient evidence to obtain meaningful results to prove individual's willingness, perspectives derived from personalised experiences. Individual interviews or surveys would possibly present more persuasive statistical dataset on the self-recognition as a 'women's' representative. Also, even after they attended the meetings, many of them did not put forward their remarks, and most of the meetings were dominated by a few members with more political experience or serving as the party representatives. For the meetings for women's policy, especially, many male politicians tend to speak less, voted for the policy without any objections as seen from the results of legislative votes.

From the minutes and hearing records, most of the members expressed their opinions rather freely, and sometimes aggressively regardless of the party position as analysed in the previous section. Many used and expressed their experiences from child care, domestic labour, discrimination in the workplace, pregnancy and childbirth, which can hardly be experienced as a male in Korea. Interestingly enough, many women have used their personal experiences as a wife and mother in the discussions. It was also notable that they also differentiated themselves as a group of 'women,' not only they had to oppose to male politicians, but in their general debates to persuade the others. The comments reflect the proactiveness of female politicians when it comes to women's policy. It further implies that female politicians had a very high level of consciousness on their role and responsibility as representatives of women in South Korea.

4.3.1. Summary

Even among the diversity of age, education, career, political activities, and political parties, female politicians actively participated in legislative activities based on their life experiences as mothers, workers and individuals. Nonetheless, fundamentally, the identification of gender as a female formed a unique commonality among them. Also, the words and phrases used such as ‘us’ and ‘as we all know’ reflected that they tend see each other within same identity framework, with shared experiences and interests as women.

<Table 4: Comments of Female Politicians and Thematic Keywords>

Category	Comments	Thematic keywords
Maternity Protection and Childcare Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “There are so many occasions that we (mothers) cannot carry our babies..” (268th National Assembly Meeting) · “..to be raised and cared by their mothers or grandmother is the greatest option for babies...” (278th National Assembly) · “For us, women, we have to be conscious about having a child and giving a birth...” (284th National Assembly Meeting) · “Mothers spend average two weeks at postnatal centre...you (male politician) say it because you have never been to those centres.” (337th National Assembly Meeting) · “We have seen the rapid increase of ‘single mother’ who have dual responsibility of childcare and work to sustain daily lives for family. The government should financially support them, not only for the low-income receiving basic national security pensions, but to the second-lowest income households as well.” (258th National Assembly Meeting)⁶¹ 	Women (we, us, our), Mother, Maternity leave, Pregnancy, Baby, Child(ren)

⁶¹ 17th National Assembly Meeting Minutes, 258th, 9th Plenary Session, (27th February, 2006), 7; The comment was made by the politician in her 40s, completed her degree in law with professional career experience as politician.

<p>Family and Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “I could not have another child because of the working environment...I strongly wanted to take off the pressure from working mums...” (17th Assembly public hearings) · “..Corporations should be willing to cooperate in this process. Would you mind talking about how to make a ‘family-friendly’ corporate culture with us?” (284th National Assembly Meeting) · “They (girls) say our career is interrupted because of the marriage, pregnancy and delivering children.” · “..to prevent women’s career interruption...focus in the work-family balance.” · “People (women) will think about marriage...if there are enough services and regulations from their workplaces that guarantee maternity leaves...and childcare support.” (337th National Assembly Meeting) 	<p>Women (we, us, our), Working environment, Corporate (working) culture, Career interruption, Maternity leave, Child(ren)</p>
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V. Conclusion

Researches had already been proved the importance of women's political representation for democracy, justice and equality of the society. It also provided the rationale for the introduction of a gender quota system for elections, mainly to secure the number of seats for women. Many countries around the world have already adopted a quota system as the most effective political system to achieve the goal of better political representation of women. The electoral gender quota system is, however, only regarded as a tool for improving descriptive representation, provoking the criticism that there is a need to find out whether female representatives have an interest in women's issues and willing to act for women that gives legitimacy as 'women's' political representation. While there are efforts to discover linkage, or to reduce the gap between descriptive and substantive representation, nonetheless, there still exists a consensus among researchers that increasing women's political participation is essential for women's socio-economic activities and the social development. Likewise, the political representation of women in the South Korean government has been alleviated through various laws and institutional measures, let alone the continuous efforts made by women and civil organisations claiming for more political participation. The revision of the existing National Election Law enabled easier access to the political institutions for women, such as the national assembly in South Korea. The increasing numbers after each assembly prove that electoral quota system has been effective as the appropriate institutional strategy for descriptive representation of women.

As others who are concerned with substantive representation would argue, it would still be misleading to conclude that women are represented by the number of women politicians in the parliament. In this regard, the thesis examined if the

number of proposed and passed women's policy was congruent with the more presence of female politicians, based on the theories that their life experiences as women would make them more aware of women's issues. From the previous discussions, it had been argued that until the number of female members reached the tipping point, female members will not be able to make critical changes in the parliament and, or, assimilated to male members due to the small number of females to band together. However, in the South Korean National Assembly, the number of proposals and passed women's policy presented increment, showing statistically significant results. Even during the 16th national assembly, when they only composed of 6.08 percent in the national assembly, the number of women's policies proposed and enacted outnumbered that of male politicians. Furthermore, as the number of female members began to double since the 17th assembly, female politicians more likely to actively initiate women's policies. The result demonstrated that although the proportion of women in the national assembly is just above the least threshold point of 15 percent, women's policies were actively initiated by female politicians. Also, they specified the women's interest in socio-economic participation free from the social and cultural constraints developed from patriarchal traditions that strengthened the gendered division of labour. From the policy outcomes, the effects of presence are evident in South Korea, suggesting the possibilities of closing the gap between numbers and effects debate of descriptive and substantive representation.

The analysis of individual background was organised to examine the ways in which personal traits, as internal elements, effected regarding shaping policy interest areas for all female politicians in the national assembly. In this regard, the relationship between policy proposals and individual backgrounds, such as age, education, career, elected terms and political party affiliation was examined.

From the result, individual's professional career experience, elected terms and party affiliation have some level of influence on legislative activities of female politicians. Nevertheless, personal background somewhat failed to provide the patterns, instead suggested that women's policies were equally initiated by all female members with different personal backgrounds and experiences. While the increased presence of female politicians would continue to achieve descriptive representation, people with diverse experience tend to articulate policies that can represent women's issues in different areas and status they are positioned in. The analysis evaluated that albeit partially, substantive representation was achieved in this regard. Finally, the examination of comments made at assembly meetings and public hearing records, if the female politicians were willing to represent 'women as a woman'. The gender differences in policy preferences were prominent. It would be no exaggeration to say that female member in the national assembly enjoyed expressing their opinions, making claims for women's issues more actively than male members.

The representation of women in Korean assembly has taken a path to discover the characteristics that are distinctive to Korea, let alone embracing the issues dealt with by the existing literature in the international academia. For the past decades, notably, after the introduction of gender quota system for the candidate nominations, South Korea, to some extent achieved both descriptive and substantive representation. Despite being a minority group in the national assembly, female politicians, with diverse personal background and experiences, have been articulating more women's policies. The result of analysis found that, to some extent, there is a difference in policy interest and priorities according to professional career experiences and party affiliation; politicians with professional knowledge through relevant education and experience and those in more liberal

and progressive political parties. Moreover, their own perspectives that identify them as woman, therefore better able to understand other women, are making them be more responsible for representing women and their interests in legislatures in South Korea. Therefore, in the future, more attention on ‘who’ enters the national assembly and ‘what’ they do is crucial, not merely on the topic of bringing a quantitative change. As increase presence of female members in the national assembly suggested the positive policy outcomes in women’s policy area to some degree, more discussions for extra measures and institutions are perhaps the most necessary; for achieving a genuine gender-equal national assembly; for the elimination of the prevailing social and cultural constraints to participate in various socio-economic activities; for women of today and tomorrow in South Korea.

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국문 초록

역사적으로 가부장적 전통에 기반한 젠더역할 구분으로 인해 여성은 경제·사회진출에 많은 제약을 받아왔다. 특히, 정치가 남성의 영역이라는 고정관념은 여성이 정치에 참여 할 수 있는 문화 조성을 막았다. 이는 비단 여성의 권리와 남녀평등의 문제를 뛰어넘어, 동등한 참여를 보장하고 이익을 반영하는 민주주의의 규범적 기초에도 어긋난다. 여성 문제가 이슈화 되고 대변되기 위한 정치적 공론화가 가능하게끔 만들어 주는 대표자들이 의회에 더욱 필요하다는 주장과 더불어 임계치 이론 (Critical Mass Theory)은 여성 의원이 최소한 15%가 되어야 정치 문화의 변화 뿐 아니라 여성을 위한 정책 입법이 가능할 것이라고 예상했다. 따라서 UN 등 국제기구 차원에서의 노력을 기반으로 많은 나라에서 제도적 개혁을 통해 정치 대표성 강화를 도모해왔다. 대한민국 역시 이같은 세계적 흐름에 따라 2002년부터 여성할당제를 도입하였다. 이후 여성의 정치 진출은 보다 활발해졌지만, 여성 의원의 증가로 인한 의회 내 성별 구성의 변화가 실질적으로 여성의 이익과 필요를 대표하고, 문제 해결을 위한 정책의 증가를 불러오는지에 대한 여부는 아직까지 확실한 결론으로 이어지지 못하였다.

이 논문은 대한민국 제 16대-19대에 걸친 여성 국회의원들의 수적 증가로 인한 기술적 대표성의 증진과 실질적 대표성의 연관성에 관해 연구하고자 한다. 첫째로 여성의 경제·사회진출을 위한 정책들의 발의 및 입법 현황을 통해 여성의 이익과 필요가 실질적으로 대표되고 있는지 알아본다. 두 번째로 나이, 교육, 경력, 선수, 소속 정당 등 개인적 배경이 정책적 관심이나 입법활동에 영향을 주었는지 확인한다. 마지막으로 의원들이 ‘여성’으로서 여성의 이익과 필요를 정치적으로 공론화하고 대변하고 있는가에 대한 여부를 의회 회의록 발언을 통해서 살펴본다.

주요어: 여성 정치 대표성, 기술적, 실질적 대표성, 여성정책, 의정활동

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